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April 13, 1994

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MEMORANDUM

TO: AF - Mr. Moose

THROUGH: AF - Edward Brynn

FROM: AF/RA - Len Shurtleff

SUBJECT: Meeting with Belgian Ambassador Juan Cassiers,
Thursday, April 14, 1994, in Your Office

The Belgian Ambassador has requested a meeting with you on Thursday, April 14, at 4:00. AF/C Director Render, Zaire Desk Officer McCulley (notetaker), and Belgian Desk Officer Elisabeth Brocking will attend the session. The Rwandan crisis, Zaire, and other African issues will figure prominently on his agenda. The timing of the meeting is opportune, and you may wish to raise some of the country-specific topics outlined below.

The Rwanda crisis, and in particular the deaths of twelve Belgian peacekeepers and six civilians, has caused great upheaval in Belgium. Press and public opinion have attacked the GOB for sending lightly armed troops to a situation in which they were likely to be specially targeted in the event of unrest. The government has also been criticized for an African policy which has required repeated "humiliating" evacuations and for not keeping the public sufficiently informed as the Rwanda crisis proceeded. If the Belgian evacuation continues successfully and no more lives are lost, the criticism should abate; the medium and long term effects of the crisis on the GOB remain to be seen.

It is important to note that neither the government nor the people of Belgium, in general, are willing to write Rwanda off. Press accounts focus on tragic stories of the slaughter of Rwandans as well as Belgians, and the GOB remains determined to remain engaged with its former possession, though not under the now untenable UNAMIR mandate. Belgium is also preoccupied with Burundi and would appreciate any information we can share.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE

REVIEW AUTHORITY:
HARRY R. MELONE

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DECL: OADR

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"94 Rwanda Briefing Papers"

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ZAIRE

Background:

The recent votes in the HCR-PT on the issue of the Prime Ministry resolved (at least institutionally) many of the outstanding issues impeding Zaire's transition to democracy. Mobutu promulgated the transition constitution on April 9, and the political class now has 10 days (until April 20) to select a new Prime Minister. The key stipulation is that the presumptive PM must not come from the President's "political family." No one is sanguine that the Zairians will be able to meet the deadline, and if it passes with no PM, the issue will be referred back to the HCR-PT. In sum, the "resolution" of the constitutional text may simply be a formula for a continuing political impasse. As always, much will depend on Tshisekedi. Under these circumstances, it would be useful to probe the Belgian for Brussels' views on the following points:

- o Will Tshisekedi repudiate the constitutional accords?
- o If Tshisekedi and the UDPS refuse to participate in the process, will the Belgians be prepared to support a credible alternative candidate? If so, whom?
- o What should be the Trilateral position if a "government of national unity" does not include the UDPS, whether by self-exclusion or through other means?
- o Should the Three issue a joint statement noting the constitutional accord, and urging the Zairian political class to bring their deliberations to a speedy conclusion?
- o Is it time for another Trilateral meeting on Zaire (perhaps to include discussion of Rwanda and Burundi)?

RWANDA/BURUNDI

Background:

The evacuation of Belgians from Rwanda will likely not be completed by Thursday. The Belgians had requested additional equipment (American APC's) to permit them to conduct sorties to round up Belgian nationals who have not been able to reach the relative safety of the airport. ~~Some of the APC's, which are were~~ staged in Nairobi, have already arrived in Kigali ~~and the rest should reach Kigali by Thursday.~~ Fighting continues between

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the Rwandan military and the RPF, and some of the "interim government" (but apparently not the interim President) has left the capital for Gitarama, 40 kilometers to the southwest. It appears that at least part of the main RPF force has linked up with the 600-strong RPF contingent which entered Kigali last December as part of the Arusha accords.

The Belgians are seized at present with the issue of UNAMIR. There is considerable domestic pressure to withdraw the Belgian contingent, preferably with UN blessing. Although we would prefer to see the UN remain engaged as at least a political force in Rwanda, we understand the need for an orderly withdrawal of the especially vulnerable Belgian contingent. You may wish to reiterate the following points:

- o We understand Belgian concerns about the safety of its UNAMIR contingent, and we are sympathetic to the Belgian position.
- o Neither the UNAMIR mandate nor its size and weaponry would permit an active peacekeeping or peace-enforcing role in the present circumstances.
- o The United States is prepared to support a recommendation by the SYG for the rapid and orderly withdrawal of UNAMIR forces from Rwanda. We believe that such a recommendation is the most appropriate means of meeting the urgent humanitarian need to preserve the safety of UNAMIR personnel while not exacerbating tensions in Rwanda.
- o We support such a withdrawal, but believe that the security of Rwandan nationals currently under direct UNAMIR protection must be provided for in these circumstances.
- o We hope that other UN elements, including the SYG's Special Representative Booh-Booh, may be able to continue their activities in Rwanda. However, we understand that the security situation may compel them to temporarily withdraw.
- o We believe that these agencies and the SYG's representative may be able to play an important stabilizing and humanitarian role and hope that, if they must be evacuated now, they will be prepared to resume their missions as soon as security conditions permit.
- o We deeply regret the murder of the Belgian peacekeepers in Rwanda, and fully support the Belgian request for a UN inquiry into the circumstances surrounding their deaths.

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On Burundi, the Belgians seem to have been concerned by our rapid deployment of U.S. Marines into Bujumbura. It might be useful to outline for the Belgian Ambassador our thinking on the current situation in Burundi. We offer the points below if you wish to draw on them in your discussion:

- o Although the security situation in Burundi seems calm for the moment, we have ordered the departure of dependents and non-essential personnel at our Embassy in Bujumbura and advised all American citizens to leave Burundi immediately.
- o Given the situation at the airport in Kigali, Ambassador Rawson made the decision to evacuate American Embassy personnel and private American citizens by road to Burundi.
- o With the prior permission of the Burundian authorities, the U.S. Marines, C-141 transport planes, and C-130's were deployed to Bujumbura in support of this evacuation. Once the majority of American evacuees from Kigali had been safely transported from Bujumbura to Nairobi, the Marines and transport aircraft re-deployed to Mombasa, Kenya.

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